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tains these angels unawares—and banishing those that prove grotesque and incongruous, the amateur, if earnest, cannot but attain the dreamed of perfection, the loftiest realms of art.

He or she who has given no poem, no painting, no book, no song, no statue in these days when all pathways of art and literature, are open to the "Passionate Pilgrim," has not lived at all in the art life—the artistic life.

But woman will aspire so to live. She will not prove a Melusina. Art will not turn her from a woman into a serpent. It allures her because it sings to her soul a syren song, and like her soul is "*nova, solo, infinita*."

Woman is still the sphinx of art. Her hidden meanings are yet to be read. In the far reaches towards which she has been forbidden till now to look, there is not the desolation of the desert, the dry sands of a spiritual nothingness. The glowing rose of romance will re-flower for her, the pathetic lily of poesy re-lift its drooping head, the clinging vine of faith spread its tender shadows above and shelter her. Silent as yet, she will be so till she has attained to the starry cloud of her imagining, and like the Mona Lisa she will still, till then, smile with her mysterious and inexplicable smile, and if it be true that art has an eternal debt to pay to woman, of whom a French writer speaks as "the sole and supreme reason for everything in art," is she not doing valiant work when even as an amateur she strives for art's highest expression? Let her study the true well-springs of human feeling, the story, yellow with age, of past suffering and destruction—man's and woman's martyrdom in the past. Then shall the angels have speech with her, and even as a beginner she will strive for art's best and highest, as all must strive who do not believe that man is the accident and not the purpose of creation, and that belief in the immortality as well as the perfectibility of the human race does not arise solely from the wish and hope to be perfect and to be immortal.

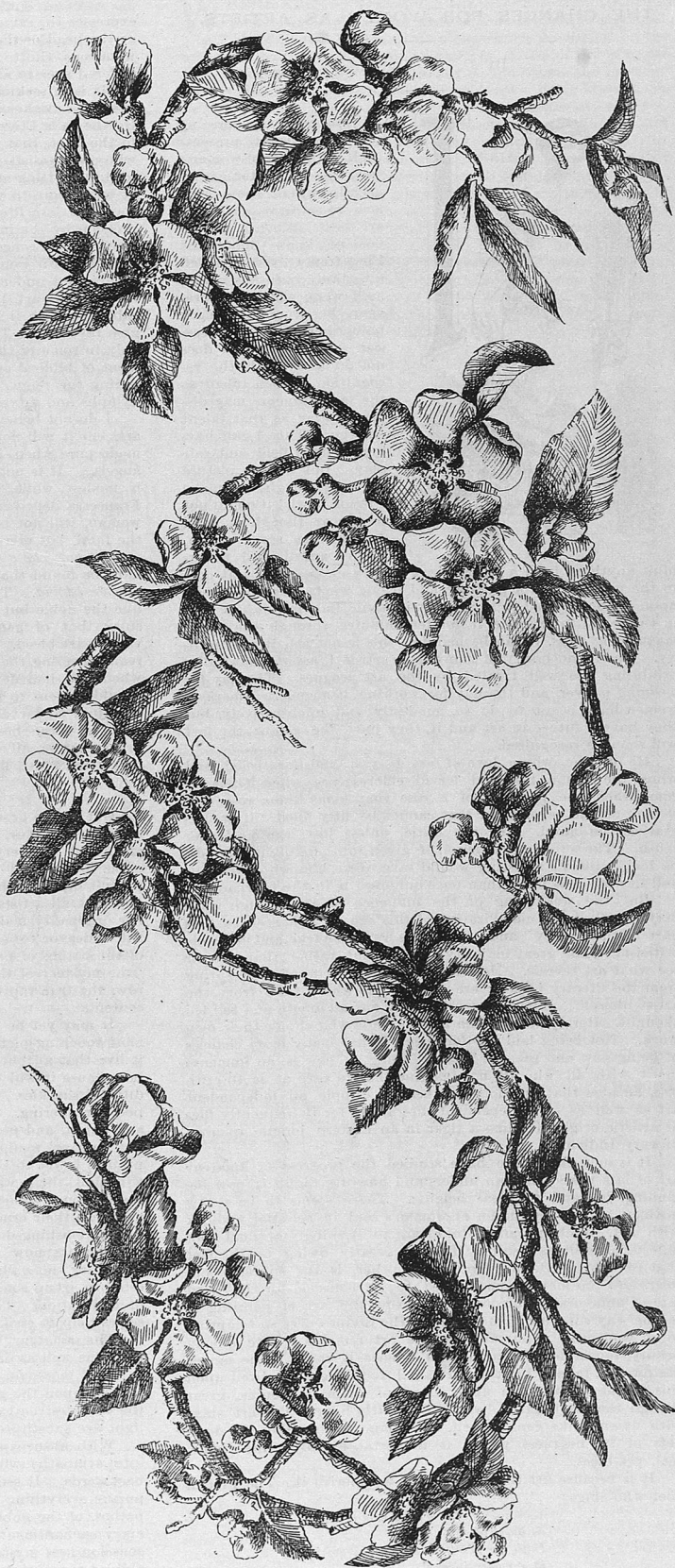
## DECORATIVE NOTES.

**W**E ARE glad to find that our suggestions as to carving as a lady-like employment and an interesting occupation have borne fruit and that it is now considered quite the fashionable thing to devote some time each day to the art. The little exercise demanded for the wrists and hands will certainly do no harm. As we have indicated only soft woods should be first taken in hand. A very good subject is a honeysuckle about budding with radiating and upstarting masses instinct with a suggestion of vitality and growth.

In stocking a new aquarium avoid putting in it any plant or fish for about a week, but fill it with water to be renewed each day. For plants, ferns, water violets, rushes, duck weed, white and yellow water lily, water cress, tape grass, sweet flag, golden club and water lobelia are very suitable. When an aquarium is surmounted by a dome supported by external pillars a gilded wire bird cage hung from centre of dome is very suitable. A small vase above dome may appropriately hold maiden hair fern, and bright flowers.

A varnish good for any kind of wood work is made by adding to one gallon of alcohol six ounces of gum sandarac, three ounces of gum mastic and one half ounce turpentine varnish. The mixture is put into a tin can which is put in a small place, occasionally shaking. Twelve days will suffice to dissolve the gums.

We had lately the pleasure of inspecting one of those old Gothic bookcases framed on the Gothic architectural model that followed on the art of printing. Its predominant perpendicular lines, its arched paneling, its union



BORDER TO BE PAINTED ON BOLTING CLOTH OR LINEN, BY S. G. VERPLANCK.

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of sobriety of effect with the most fanciful richness of detail, whilst it afforded convenient arrangement for books on carved shells, rendered it historically interesting. It was indeed a beautiful piece of furniture. A few shelves were wide apart for the admission of portly folios. In the middle was a recess supplied with a reading desk. The facade had a cathedral like look.

The most valuable varnish for protecting paintings and which has the advantage of drying with a dead gloss is a mixture of wax, elemè and the finest artist's copal with oil of spike as a solvent. Applied to walls, it penetrates, incorporates itself to a certain extent with the colors and gives them additional richness. It is in itself transparent. Its costliness as compared with other

ammoniac an ounce and a quarter each and one ounce of verdigris.

A very effective decoration of the walls of a hall just completed consists of a dado boldly divided off at given distances with square grooved pillars, these pillars being of cedar wood. The spaces between of ebonized wood contain each a framed panel of canvass displaying fanciful tracery work in colors. Above the pillars and rising two and three fourths of the height of the middle space of the wall are double pillars composed of flat shafts engirt at base with massive carving and with rich scroll capitals supporting an entablature and supported by a carved arch. In the spandril of each arch is a female head surrounded by elaborate

work also carved. The spaces provided by the pillared panel on wall are filled in with satin wood against which in each panel is set an elegantly carved frame of mahogany, with architectonic ornament at top, and fruit forms and scroll work to right and left. The frieze is paneled by heavy pendants descending from roof and touching apex of the triangular form of frame of each of the large panels. This frieze is divided longitudinally. The lower portion which is of wood stained green contains in each panel the heads of two foxes with conventionalized flowing forms between the upper portion presents on a ground of corn-leaf blue delicate wreaths of flowers and fruits. This treatment of wall may be cited as an excellent example of the structural and the ornamental.

Bad pigments or bad combinations of these are evils that on a large scale attach to the color decoration of interiors. From either of these causes, work looking well when just finished and for a short time thereafter cracks or fades. The acid pigments, mostly or earthy or vegetable matter dyed with acid dyes attack the gelatinous matter of the oil and will not dry without plenty of driers, themselves destructive. They can be applied to only with varnish mixtures to insure their working tolerably well. Frequently they do not harden sufficiently to prevent peeling. The chemical action of wrongly assorted pigments on each other often affects either color or durability. Where there are three or more pigments in a mixture one of these having a greater affinity to another in the composition will combine with it it causing the whole body of color to change its hue. There is often injurious chemical action from white lead undercoats on delicate hues over coats leading to the same result, but this may be guarded against by giving the lead surface a coat of vermilion, Indian red or madder lake. It is evident that decorators should be well posted on the reaction of colors, with reference to mixing and application.

An essential feature in all furniture that pleases is good proportion, or in other words good quantitative relation.

There is aesthetic proportion and also proportion in relation to constructive fitness. The latter, the adaptation of proportion to constructive purposes is determined by quite separate considerations which cannot be formulated into rules. Aesthetic proportion is that which satisfies the taste and sight. For this the article need not be symmetrical in the sense in which the parts are balanced by repetition on each side of a medial line. Some of the most elegant furniture displays variations in the parts,



FLORAL FORMS DECORATIVELY APPLIED, FROM "THE PLANT."

varnishes should not prevent its use where large sums are spent on decoration.

As an heightening composition for yellow gold applied in powder or as gold leaf, dissolve in water six ounces of salt petre, two ounces of copperas, one ounce of white vitriol and one ounce of alum. If wanted redder, add a small portion of blue vitriol. For heightening the hue of green gold dissolve in water a mixture consisting of an ounce and a half of salt petre, vitriol and sal-

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as in cabinets, sofas, etc., and yet whilst there is a certain irregularity, they please owing to right quantitative relation. These relations which have been reduced in music to science also exist in form and color. Architectural features in a piece of furniture are not the less attractive because of a minimised size suggesting rather ornament than utility whether in arches, piers, balustrades and various forms of support as cornices, gargoyles, brackets, or decorated roll mouldings at the intrados of arches. But without any geometrical training the eye and mind instinctively judges and rightly the suitableness of the whole, whether graceful or otherwise, as affecting the sense of propriety and the distinct consciousness of right proportion.

### POINTS ABOUT POTTERY.



THE formation of earthen vessels capable of containing fluid substances is an art of the very highest antiquity. At first, the hard shells of gourds and the larger kinds of nuts sufficed; then the skins of animals, to hold liquids; next, hollow bowls of wood; but last, the manufacture of earthen substances, which were able, without being consumed by fire, to cook provisions, boil water, &c.

It is doubtful whether the hardening and fashioning of clay was first practised by the brickmaker or potter. Bricks were burned, we know, and used at Babel, six hundred years prior to the captivity of the Israelites. Many centuries later, the Romans manufactured bricks with great perfection; but though certain that the potter's art was considerable at Rome, no specimens have come down to us. We learn, however, from Vitruvius, who wrote in the Augustan age, that the Romans made their water-pipes of potter's clay, and established potteries in England. Some of these, about a hundred and fifty years ago, were dug up in Hyde Park. They were found to be two inches in thickness, and were firmly jointed together with common mortar mixed with oil. Little figures, covered with a fine deep blue glaze, which were found deposited with Egyptian mummies, cause it to appear that porcelain was made in Egypt in very ancient times.

Vestiges of Roman Pottery are discernible in many parts of England, especially Staffordshire. Governor Pownall relates that in his time (1778) the men employed in fishing at the back of Margate Sands, in the Queen's Channel, frequently drew up in their nets some coarse and rudely formed earthen vessels. It was for some time believed that a Roman trading vessel freighted with pottery had been wrecked here; but on more carefully examining the spot, called by the fishermen Pudding Pan Sand, some Roman bricks were also discovered, cemented together, so as to prove that they had formed part of some building. Further researches showed that in Ptolemy's second book of geography an island was designated as existing in the immediate neighborhood. Such pans as were recovered in a sound state were of coarse material and rude in workmanship—many having neatly impressed upon them the name of *Attilianus*. Fragments of a finer and more fragile description of pottery were likewise brought to the surface; and little doubt remains that during the time of the Roman ascendancy in England a pottery was established upon an island here, which has long disappeared; and that the person whose name has been singularly preserved was engaged in its management.

The Portuguese, who were the means of introducing the fine earthenwares of China into Europe, derive it from the Portuguese *porcelana*, which signifies a *cup*; but some derive it from *porcella*, Latin for a *little pig*, because the glazing, or varnish, and colors of porcelain resemble the shells used in some parts of the East instead of money (cowries), and which, from the similarity of their shape to the back of a little pig, were so called.

It was long believed on the authority of Carden and the elder Scaliger—who, although violently opposed to each other on various and more important subjects, yet agreed in this—that porcelain was made from a mixture of broken egg and sea shells, which were preparatively buried in the earth for nearly a hundred years. The Jesuit, Francis D'Entrecolles, in the eighteenth century, having clandestinely stolen vases from China, they were chemically analysed by Reaumur, and their component parts exactly ascertained. From that period, France rose in the manufacture of its porcelains wonderfully, and the works of Sèvres were taken under royal patronage.

The Porcelain Tower erected at Nankin offers proof sufficient of the very durable nature of their manufacture. The building is of an octagonal shape, of nine stories, and very nearly three hundred feet high, and its entire surface is covered with porcelain of the finest quality. Although this singular and beautiful edifice has been erected more than four hundred and fifty years it has hitherto withstood all the alterations of the seasons, and every variety of weather, without exhibiting the slightest symptoms of deterioration.

"The vaults of the Chinese Palace at Dresden," says Jonas

Hanway, in his account of his travels, published in 1753, "consist of fourteen apartments, filled with Chinese and Dresden porcelain. One would imagine there were sufficient to stock a whole country; and yet they say, with an air of importance, that a hundred thousand pieces more are wanted to complete the furnishing of this single palace. There are a great number of porcelain figures of wolves, bears, leopards, &c., some of them as big as life; a prodigious variety of birds, and a curious collection of different flowers. A clock is preparing for the gallery, whose bells are also to be of porcelain; I heard one of them proved, and think they are sufficient to form any music; but the hammers must be of wood. There are forty-eight large china vases, which appear to be of no use, nor in any way extraordinary, except for their great size; and yet his Polish majesty purchased them of the late king of Prussia at the price of a whole regiment of dragoons."

### HOW TO RE-GILD CHAIRS.

IN regilding a chair it must first be washed very carefully with white soap and warm water, rubbing it well, and seeing that all stains are removed. When perfectly dry every part that requires gilding is to receive a coating of Japan gold size put on with a medium sized camel's hair brush. Should any portion to be gilded be left unsized the gold, of course, will not adhere. When the size has become tacky, which will be in two or three minutes, the gold leaf is laid on, but if this is done too early the gold will show a mat surface. Having slightly warmed the gold leaf take a sheet of paper that has been well waxed on one side and pick up a gold leaf with the edge of the waxed surface and lay it flat on the seat, blowing it gently to make it settle down. Continue to lay on the leaves this way, always making them overlap each other at the edges until the seat is covered. Then cut a sheet of gold leaf in small pieces and lay one of these on wherever the gold looks thin, or has broken or does not cover. Next press the gold with a small pad of cotton wool, gently and firmly all over, rubbing away the pieces that do not adhere, and flattening the whole surface. A clean dry camel's hair brush will help to take off gold that has not adhered. Follow out the same process with other parts of the chair. The gilding finished make some clear size by cutting vellum shavings small, putting them in a glazed earthen dish and covering them with water. The dish is then to be covered and set in the oven until the shavings are quite soft. Strain the shavings from the water and leave it to get cold, when it will be in a jelly state. Lap a coat of this upon the chair, and the next day varnish the gilding with white spirit varnish. If parchment for the size cannot be obtained, pieces of white leather will serve the purpose.

### THE AMERICAN IDEA.

THE claim is advanced by some very excellent people, and patriotic Americans withal, that our forefathers left the war of the revolution only half fought. It is true that they miscellaneously whipped the red-coats, and drove Mr. Cornwallis and his satraps beyond the sea, thus being enabled to set up in a government business for themselves. But the independence so acquired, and which we celebrate every Fourth of July, was not at all as complete as it might and should have been. The sway of a monarchy was overthrown, but we still crawled along under the yoke of British traditions and prejudices, meekly accepting as our own all their methods and preferences in literature and the arts. Only in later days have men come to perceive that this course was unworthy of America and its destiny. God hath given to us, they say, an inheritance of colossal proportions as well as of magnificent beauty. It has elements and features of greatness all its own, and is vastly more self-sufficing than was ever Egypt or Greece, Rome, France or Britain. Nature exhibits herself here, too, from the daisy to the cyclone, in aspect and in movement, on a scale of loveliness and grandeur that is elsewhere unknown to men. And the race who inherit these splendors, being dowered with ideas of liberty that transcend all former dreams, might reasonably be inspired to create a new literature and arts more in harmony with the conditions prevailing around them. Why not a distinctive American poetry, sculpture, architecture and art types generally, each "racy of the soil," instead of a slavish imitation of and adherence to European standards? This is the question asked and this the crusade being fought by men who have what we call "the American idea"—not as meanly referred to questions of statecraft or economy, but as bearing on the loftier theme of intellectual growth and conquest.

Among the new advocates of these views we hail with much satisfaction our friend Col. J. A. Price, of Scranton, Pa., whose attainments as a scientist—proven in connection with the stove and furnace interests—are now found to be associated with a high discernment in art matters that might not be unworthy of a Ruskin. A very eloquent essay which he has contributed to the *DECORATOR AND FURNISHER* will be everywhere recognized as in championship of this American idea. We would fain reprint here—entire, and in relation to a prevailing controversy—his admirable plea as to the forms of nature herself being the best and truest models in art, but we are constrained to limit our transcript to the remarks which he has made in more immediate connection with heating and stove ornamentation.—*American Artisan*.